

March 11, 1999

I urge our colleagues to join us in supporting the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act of 1999.

THE PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYER-
EMPLOYEE COOPERATION ACT
OF 1999

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to join my friend from Ohio, Mr. NEY, myself, and over 100 of their colleagues, to support the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act of 1999.

Congress has long recognized the importance of assuring and protecting the right of workers to collectively bargain. Over the years, federal laws have been extended to guarantee collective bargaining to different sectors and now the only sizable group of workers without the rights to collectively bargain are employees of state and local government.

This is particularly troubling as it applies to the public safety arena. Fire fighters and police officers take seriously their oath to protect the public and as a result they do not engage in worker slowdowns or stoppages. The absence of the right to collectively bargain denies them the opportunity to influence decisions that affect their lives.

The Public Safety Employer-Employee Act provides public safety officers with a collective bargaining right that is outside the scope of other federal labor laws. This legislation establishes basic minimum standards that state laws must meet and provides a process to resolve impasses in states without such laws. States that already have collective bargaining laws would be exempt from the federal statute. Furthermore, this bill prohibits strikes and does not call for mandatory binding arbitration.

Public safety workers risk their lives every day to protect the public. At the very least, they should be allowed to bargain for wages, hours, and safe working conditions. This bill helps workers, management, and the general public, because employer-employee cooperation leads to cost savings and better delivery of services.

This bill is supported by the International Association of Fire Fighters, International Brotherhood of Police Officers, International Union of Police Organizations, National Association of Police Organizations, and the Fraternal Order of Police.

I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act of 1999.

EXPRESS YOUR CONCERN ABOUT
CHINA

HON. JOHN E. SWEENEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. SWEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I would respectfully request all of my colleagues to join

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

me in signing a letter requesting the President to use the upcoming visit with China's Premier Zhu Rongji to express our profound concern regarding several issues, including: Human rights violations in China and Tibet; China's ongoing public vilification against Japan; China's deployment of several hundred missiles against Taiwan; China's buildup of their nuclear strike capability; China's clandestine efforts to acquire secret United States military technologies; China's assistance to the development of the North Korea missile program; and China's sales of missile and nuclear technologies to terrorist states.

If you agree with me that the time has come for some truth and realism to be put back into our relations with the People's Republic of China please join in signing the letter I have submitted into the RECORD by contacting my office.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: We are taking this opportunity, in advance of Premier Zhu Rongji's visit, to express our profound concern about several issues involving the People's Republic of China.

Since 1994 the P.R.C. has been constructing military facilities in the Spratly Islands. The size and nature of these facilities suggest that the P.R.C. is attempting to establish a permanent strategic presence in the area, from which it could patrol the sea lanes in the South China Sea, the waterway through which one sixth of the world's trade is shipped.

The military buildup in the Spratly Islands has been accompanied by an ever more strident campaign of public vilification against Japan, a treaty ally of the United States and the base for 50,000 United States troops, the largest single concentration of United States military forces abroad. In another strategic concern, in March 1997 a Chinese controlled company was able to obtain, from Panama, the rights to the port facilities that flank the canal zone.

Then there is the matter of the democratic nation of Taiwan. The P.R.C.'s 1995 military exercises and 1996 missile firings in the Taiwan Strait have been followed by an offensive military buildup on the Chinese mainland itself that includes tripling the number of missiles (to more than 100) already deployed against Taiwan. With several hundred more missiles expected for similar deployment, the recent Defense Department study on the military balance in the Taiwan Strait describes an "overwhelming advantage in offensive missiles which Beijing is projected to possess in 2005."

These developments are all the more alarming when seen against the backdrop of (1) China's overall military modernization, its abandonment of a traditional, land-based "people's army" in favor a comprehensive strategic and nuclear strike capability by land, sea, and air; (2) China's clandestine efforts to acquire the most secret and sensitive of United States military technologies, including the know-how to replicate the W 88 warhead, the most dangerous security breach in 50 years; and (3) allegations that China has assisted the North Korean missile program, on top of its known and suspected sales of missile and nuclear technologies to terrorist states.

Mr. President, with respect to China, our country has looked the other way for too long. And we have tolerated a ballooning trade deficit for too long. We request that you make it emphatically clear to Premier Zhu that the United States has legal and

moral obligations to our allies that we will honor. And if that means, as we believe it does, a land or sea based missile defense in the Western Pacific—then so be it.

Mr. President, we would also request that you emphasize the P.R.C.'s worsening record regarding human rights violations in China and Tibet. Among these violations are the recent excessive jail and labor camp sentences for pro-democracy activists, Xu Wenli, Qin Yongmin, Wang Youcai, and Zhang Shanguang, the latter for allegedly "providing intelligence to hostile foreign organizations" while giving an interview on Radio Free Asia regarding farmer protests.

And as for Taiwan, now is the time to remind Beijing that the Taiwan Relations Act—the law of the United States—mandates the United States to "make available to Taiwan such defense articles in such quantity as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability. That is our law, period. And that same law mandates that the determination of what Taiwan needs will be made by "the President and the Congress."

Mr. President, the United States policy toward the P.R.C. has been based on wishful thinking for far too long. Policy makers in the Administration of both parties have time and time again been willing to give Chinese leaders the benefits of the doubt only to be consistently let down. The occasion of Premier Zhu's visit provides a timely opportunity to put some truth and realism back into this relationship. It will take the same kind of resolution you showed by sending aircraft carriers into the Taiwan Strait in 1996. We applauded you then, and we will support you now in taking the necessary steps to protect the United States interests and our allies in the region.

PERMANENTLY FIX THE
ALTERNATIVE MINIMUM TAX

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to permanently fix the tax problem caused by the fact that the new tax credits for education and children are limited by the alternative minimum tax (AMT). Consequently, more and more average Americans who use the dependent care credit, the new child credit, the HOPE credit or the lifelong learning credit, will be forced to fill out the complex alternative minimum tax form. Even worse, a growing number of Americans will have all or part of these credits denied by the interaction of the regular federal income tax and the alternative minimum tax.

This is not a new issue. Last year I introduced legislation, H.R. 4489, to permanently fix this problem. Once it was clear that permanent legislation would not pass, I introduced H.R. 4611 to correct this problem for 1998. This one year temporary "fix" did pass Congress last fall as part of the Omnibus Appropriations Act. This year, the Administration's budget includes a two year "fix" of this problem. This is simply not enough. This is a permanent problem; it demands a permanent solution.

Specifically, my legislation allows personal nonrefundable credits to be used against AMT

4355